

Council on Postsecondary Education 2006-08 Research Support Program Guidelines

Introduction

The Kentucky Postsecondary Education Improvement Act of 1997 (HB 1) establishes aggressive goals for the University of Kentucky (UK) and the University of Louisville (UofL). By the year 2020, UK is to become a major comprehensive research institution ranked nationally in the top 20 public universities and UofL is to become a premier, nationally recognized, metropolitan research university. Recognizing the importance of ambitious research agendas for achieving these goals, the Kentucky Department of Commercialization and Innovation, the Council on Postsecondary Education, and UK and UofL officials developed a goal of reaching \$500 million in extramural academic research and development expenditures (\$300 million at UK and \$200 million at UofL) as defined by the National Science Foundation by the year 2010. To attain this goal, both institutions need the necessary infrastructure for a healthy research enterprise.

Program Goals

The primary goals of the Research Support Program are to promote economic development, create high-tech jobs, and raise the average standard of living of Kentucky residents through strategic investments in research faculty at the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville. To help accomplish these aims, campus administrators are expected to recruit and retain research active faculty in areas of strategic benefit to the Commonwealth. Additional objectives include:

- Generate increases in federal and extramural research expenditures.
- Facilitate Kentucky's transition to a knowledge-based economy.
- Create an environment that fosters increased innovation and opportunities for commercialization.
- Stimulate business development.

Program Funding

As part of its biennial budget recommendation to the Governor, the Council on Postsecondary Education recommended \$4.0 million of recurring funds and \$18.0 million of nonrecurring funds for the Research Support Program in the first year of the 2006-08 biennium. That recommendation included requests for \$4.0 million in recurring funds to build research capacity, \$15.0 million in nonrecurring funds to finance laboratory renovations and equipment purchases, and \$3.0 million in nonrecurring funds to support university research initiatives.

During the 2006 legislative session, the General Assembly appropriated \$1.5 million of recurring funds to the program in 2006-07 and an additional \$1.5 million of recurring funds in 2007-08 (for a total of \$3.0 million in year two). The stated purpose of the appropriation is to provide General Funds to support a research capacity pool.

Research capacity funds will support university efforts to build intellectual capital in areas of strategic benefit to the Commonwealth. The funds will be allocated one-third to the University of Louisville and two-thirds to the University of Kentucky, based on the House Bill 1 statute governing the Research Challenge Trust Fund. To qualify for research capacity funds, each institution should submit a brief one-time proposal outlining the areas being targeted for use of the funds to the Council by close of business October 1, 2006. It is anticipated that, in subsequent biennia, research capacity funds will become recurring to the institutions, rather than to the Research Support Program. The Council staff will seek to have a provision added to the 2008-2010 appropriations bill, so that any research capacity funds not distributed by the end of the biennium (i.e., close of business Monday, June 30, 2008) will be carried forward in the funding program until guideline requirements have been satisfied.

Uses of Program Funds

Research capacity funds will be used to recruit and retain prominent, research-active faculty in areas of strategic benefit to the Commonwealth. Appropriate uses for these funds include start-up costs, salaries, benefits, travel, and other professional expenses as permitted by university policy for faculty positions in CPE priority areas.

At least 70 percent of program funds must be used to support research-active faculty in university programs of distinction or academic disciplines contained within five economic development clusters:

- Human Health and Development
- Biosciences
- Materials Science and Advanced Manufacturing
- Information Technologies and Communications
- Environmental and Energy Technologies

These clusters define important areas of opportunity for economic growth in the Commonwealth, which could become magnets for both talent and capital.

Program funds must supplement, rather than supplant, existing institutional budget allocations for research faculty within a given discipline.

Annual Reporting

The Council staff, working with the research institutions, will devise and maintain reporting procedures that specify the content and format of Research Support Program annual reports. The reports will include accountability for outcomes that support campus action plans contained within the 2005-2010 Public Agenda.